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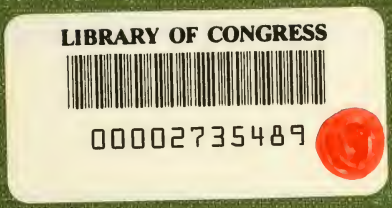

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THE

TRUE BASIS

OF

American Independence:

A LECTURE

'ORE THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE, NEW YORK,

OCT. 20, 1853, IN THE BROADWAY TABERNACLE.

BY

WILLIAM H. SEWARD,

'ED STATES' SENATOR, AND EX-GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK.

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THE TRUE BASIS

OF

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

Fellow-Citizens: I do not know how lightly you, who are hurried so fast through the ever-changing panorama of metropolitan life, may regard the quiet scenes of this unpretending festival, appointed and arranged with so much care by the American Institute; but I confess for myself, that, coming from a distant and rural home, and so being never more than an occasional spectator here, I find always the same first freshness, in these autumnal shows of flowers, and fruits, and animals of subsistence, fleece and burden, trained and perfected by hard yet gentle hands; and these annual trials of the skill of emulous, yet unambitious men and women, in the use of the spade and the plow, the forge and the furnace, the dairy and the needle, the spindle and the loom, innocent in their nature, yet beneficent in their effect, by stimulating invention and enterprise, while they faithfully mark, as years roll on, the progress which our country is making in arts and civilization, never fail to excite within me sympathies and emotions more profound and pleasing, than any State pageant which I have witnessed at home, or the most imposing demonstration of military power that can be seen in any other and less favored land.

Society divides concerning that progress. Those who are occupied with their own personal cares, and apprehensive of evil in every change, look upon it with indifference or distrust; others,

knowing that in a Republic, constituted as this is, there is always a restless activity toward either peace or war, virtue or vice, greatness or shame, devote themselves to the duty of regulating that activity, and giving it a right direction.

The members of the American Institute are of this class. Having constantly sympathized with them heretofore, when their unremitted labors secured neither rewards nor favor, I rejoice in meeting them now, under more propitious circumstances. I congratulate you, Messrs. Reese, Livingston and Hall, Stillman, Meigs and Chandler, and others, associates, that your institution has been adopted as a model by many towns, and by all the counties in this State, by the State itself, and by many other States; and that your instructions and example, patiently continued through so many years, have at last induced the nation itself to consent to appear, and to win some significant trophies, in the Exhibition of Universal Industry, already held in London, and to inaugurate another and brilliant one in the world's new capital, which we are founding on this yet rude coast of a recently impassable ocean.

Nevertheless, I have been for many reasons habitually averse from mingling in the sometimes excited debates which crowd upon each other in a great city. There was, however, an authority which I could not disobey, in the venerable name and almost paternal kindness of the eminent citizen, who so recently presided here with dignity and serenity all his own; and who transmitted the invitation of the Institute, and persuaded its acceptance!

How sudden his death! Only three weeks ago, the morning mail brought to me his announcement of his arrival to arrange this exhibition, and his summons to me to join him here; and the evening dispatch, on the self same day, bore the painful intelligence that the lofty genius which had communed with kindred spirits so long, on the interests of his country, had departed from the earth, and that the majestic form which had been animated by it, had disappeared forever from among living men.

I had disciplined myself when coming here, so as to purpose to speak no word for the cause of human freedom, lest what might seem too persistent an advocacy might offend. But must I, there

fore, abridge of its just proportions the eulogium which the occasion and the character of the honored dead alike demand?

The first ballot which I cast for the chief magistracy of my native and most beloved State, bore the name of James Tallmadge, as the alternate of De Witt Clinton. If I have never faltered in pursuing the policy of that immortal statesman, through loud reproach and vindictive opposition during his life, and amid clamors and contentions, often amounting almost to faction, since his death, I have found as little occasion to hesitate or waver in adhering to the counsels and example of the illustrious compeer, who, after surviving him so many years, has now been removed, in ripened age, to the companionship of the just. How does not time vindicate fidelity to Truth and to our country! A vote for Clinton and Tallmadge in 1824, what censures did it not bring then? Who will impeach *that* ballot now?

A statesman's claim to the gratitude of his country rests on what were, or what would have been, the results of the policy he has recommended. If the counsels of James Tallmadge had completely prevailed, then not only would American forests, mines, soil, invention, and industry, have rendered our country, now and forever, independent of all other nations, except for what climate forbids; but then, also, no menial hand would ever have guided a plough, and no footstep of a slave would ever have been tracked on the soil of all that vast part of our national domain that stretches away from the banks of the Mississippi to the far western ocean.

This was the policy of James Tallmadge. It was worthy of New-York, in whose name it was promulgated. It would have been noble, even to have altogether failed in establishing it. He was successful, however, in part, though only through unwise delays and unnecessary compromises, which he strenuously opposed, and which, therefore, have not impaired his just fame. And so in the end, he more nearly than any other citizen of our time, realized the description of the happiest man in the world, given to the frivolous Crœsus by the great Athenian: "He saw his offspring, and they all survived him. At the close of an honorable and prosperous life, on the field of civic victory, he was re-

warded with the honors of a public funeral, by the State that he had enriched, adorned, and enlarged."

Gentlemen of the American Institute, Dr. Johnson truly said—that the first man who balanced a straw on his nose; the first man who rode three horses at a time; in short, all such men deserved the applause of mankind, on account, not of the use of what they did, but of the dexterity which they exhibited; for that every thing which enlarged the sphere of human powers, and showed man that he could do what he thought he could not do, was valuable. I apprehend that this is a true exposition of the philosophy of your own most useful labors.

The increase of personal power and skill diminishes individual dependence; and individual independence, when it pervades the whole State, is national independence. It is only when, through such individuality of its members, a nation attains a certain independence, that it passes from that condition of society in which it thinks, moves, and acts, whether for peace or for war, for right or for wrong, according to the interests or caprices of one, or of a few persons, (a condition which defines monarchy or aristocracy,) to that better condition in which it thinks, moves, and acts, in all things, under the direction of one common interest, ascertained and determined by the intelligent consent of a majority, or all of its members; which condition constitutes a Republic or Democracy. So Democracy, wherever it exists, is more or less perfect, and, of course, more or less safe and strong, according to the tone of individuality maintained by its citizens.

Of all men, and of all nations, it seems to me that Americans, and this Republic, have at once the least excuse for a want of independence, and the most need for assuming and maintaining it.

No other nation has equal elements of society and of Empire. Charlemagne, when founding his kingdom, saw, or might have seen, that while it was confined by the ocean and by the Mediterranean on the west and on the south, it was equally shut in northerly and eastwardly by river and mountain barriers, which would be successfully maintained forever, by races as vigorous and as independent as the Franks themselves. Alfred the Great saw so clearly how his country was circumscribed by the seas, that he never once thought of continental Empire. The future

career of France and England may, like the past, be filled up with spasmodic efforts to enlarge fixed dominions by military conquests, and agricultural and commercial colonies, but all such attempts, even if they should be as gigantic as those which have heretofore been made, will, like them, be followed by disastrous reactions, bringing the nations back again, and confining them at last within their natural and earliest borders. No political system can be held together permanently, by force suspending or overpowering the laws of political affinity and gravitation. Unlike those nations, we are a homogeneous people, occupying a compact and indivisible domain, peculiarly adapted to internal commerce, seventeen times greater than that of France, and an hundred times more extended than that of Great Britain. While it spreads eastward and westward across the Continent, nature has not interposed, nor has man erected, nor can he raise, a barrier on the north or on the south, that can prevent any expansion that shall be found necessary, provided only that our efforts to effect it shall be, as they ought to be, wise, peaceful, and magnanimous. Only Russia excels us in territorial greatness. But while all of her vast population are not merely willing, but even superstitious subjects, of an unmitigated despotism, more than four-fifths of them are predial slaves. If such a population could, within any short period, rise up to a state of comparative social elevation, such a change would immediately lead to seditions that must inevitably result in dismemberment of the Empire.

Why should we go abroad for mineral materials, or for metallic treasures, since this broad domain of ours is even more plentifully than any equal portion of the earth, stored with Marl, Gypsum, Salt, Coal, Quicksilver, Lead, Copper, Iron and Gold? Where shall we find quarries and forests, producing more amply the materials for architecture, whether for the purposes of peace, or of war on land or on sea? Our cities may be built of our own free-stone, marble and granite; and our Southern coasts are fringed with pine and live-oak, while timber and lumber, diversified and exhaustless, crown our Northern mountains and plains.

Why should we resort to other soils and climates for supplies of subsistence, if we except spices, dyes, and some not indispensable tropical fruits, since we have sugar, rice and cotton fields

stretching along the shore of the Gulf, long mountain ranges, such as those of Virginia and Vermont, declivities in which the vine delights, along the banks of the Ohio, and the endless prairies, fertile in all cereal grains, tobacco, flax and hemp, that border the Lakes and the Mississippi, and their widely-branching and far-reaching inlets and tributaries?

If there is virtue in blood, what nation traces its lineage to purer and gentler stocks? And what nation increases in numbers, by either immigration or by native births, more rapidly? And what nation, moreover, has risen in intelligence equally or so fast?

If it be asked whether we have spirit and vigor proportioned to our natural resources, I answer, look at these thirteen original States. Their vigor is not only unimpaired, but it is increasing. Then, look at the eighteen others, offshoots of those stocks. They are even more elastic and thrifty. Consider how small and how recently planted were the germs of all this political luxuriance, and to what early hardships and neglect they were exposed. Can we not reasonably look for a maturity full of strength and majesty?

Moreover, the circumstances of the age are propitious to us. The nations on this continent are new, youthful and fraternal, while those existing on the other are either lying in hopeless debasement, or are preparing to undergo the convulsions of an indispensable regeneration. What power, then, need we fear? What power, if we were in danger, could yield us protection, or even aid?

While our constitutions and laws establish political equality, they operate to produce social equality also, by preventing monopolies of land and great accumulation of wealth; and so they afford incentives to universal activity and emulation. Why, then, should not the American citizen and the American Republic be consciously independent in all things, as in all things they are safe and free?

Such independence should be attained and preserved, not by a few only, but, as far as possible, by all citizens. It is not less essential that the farmer, the mechanic, and the laborer shall enjoy it, than that it shall regulate the action of the merchant, the law-

yer and the statesman. Every member of the State may become a soldier and even a senator. He can never be less than an elector. What does not the Republic owe to Sherman and Franklin? Yet, they were mechanics. What would not have been its fate but for the independence of the captors of Andre? Yet, Paulding, Williams and Van Wart were mere laboring men.

Virtue is confessedly the vital principle of the Republic: but virtue cannot exist without courage, which is only the consciousness of independence.

We are bound to recommend Republican Institutions to the acceptance of other nations. Can we do so, if we are content to be no wiser, no more virtuous, no more useful to Humanity, than those to whom such institutions are denied? Responsibility is always in proportion to the talent enjoyed. Neither man nor nation can be wise or really virtuous, or useful, when dependent on the caprice or even on the favor of another. Is there one among the tens of thousands of inventions in the Patent Office that was made by a slave, or even by one whose blood had been recently attainted by slavery? Peter the Great, master of so many millions of slaves, resorted to the shop of a free mechanic of Saardam to learn the mystery of ship-building. His successor, Nicholas, employs Whistler, a Massachusetts engineer, to project his railroads; Ross Winans, a Baltimore mechanic, to construct his locomotives; and Orsamus Eaton, a carriage-maker of Troy, to construct his cars. Do you wonder that loving Freedom for such fruits, I also have set my face firmly against Slavery?

If we act hereafter as we have acted hitherto, we shall be continually changing old things, old laws, old customs, and even old Constitutions, for new ones. Does any one doubt this? Have we not already a third Constitution in this State? Has any one of the States a Constitution older than twenty-five years? But political progress, if not regulated with moderation, may move too fast; and if not wisely guided will lead to ruin. It is the people themselves, and not any power above or aside from them, that alone must regulate and direct that progress. Be they never so honest, they cannot discharge so great a political trust wisely, except they act on such generous impulses, and with such lofty purposes, as only bold and independent men can conceive. The

people must be independent, or this Republic, like all Republics that have gone before it, must be ruled and ruined by demagogues.

I am far from supposing that we are signally deficient in independence. I know that it is a national, a hereditary and a popular sentiment; that we annually celebrate, and always glory in our independence. We do so justly, for nowhere else does even a form or a shadow of popular independence exist; while here it is the very rock on which our Institutions rest. Nevertheless, occasions for the exercise of this virtue may be neglected.

We hold in contempt, equally just and profound, him who imposes, and him who wears a menial livery; and yet, I think, that we are accustomed to regard with no great severity, the employer who exacts, or the mechanic, clerk or laborer, who yields political conformity in consideration of wages. We insist, as we ought, that every citizen in the State shall be qualified by education for citizenship; but we are by no means unanimous that one citizen, or class of citizens, shall not prescribe its own creed, in the instruction of the children of others. We construct and remodel partizan formulas and platforms with changing circumstances, with almost as much diligence and versatility as the Mexicans; and we attempt to enforce conformity to them, with scarcely less of zeal and intolerance, not indeed by the sword, but by the greater terror of political proscription. We resist argument, not always with argument, but often with personal denunciation, and sometimes even with combined violence. We differ, indeed, as to the particular errors of political faith, that shall be corrected by this extreme remedy; but, nevertheless, the number of those who altogether deny its necessity and suitableness in some cases, is very small.

We justly maintain that a Free Press is the palladium of liberty; and yet, mutually proscribing all editorial independence that is manifested by opposition to our own opinions, we have only attained a press that is free in the sense that every interest, party, faction, or sect, can have its own independent organ. If it be still maintained, notwithstanding these illustrations to the contrary, that entire social independence prevails, then, I ask, why is it so necessary to preserve with jealousy, as we justly do, the ballot, in

lieu of open suffrage; for if every citizen is really free from all fear and danger, why should he mask his vote more than his face. Believe me, fellow-citizens, independence always languishes in the very degree that intolerance prevails. We smile at the vanity of the factory girl at Lowell, who, having spent the secular part of the week in making calicos for the use of her unsophisticated countrywomen, disdainfully arrays herself on Sundays exclusively in the tints of European dyes; and yet, we are indifferent to the fact that beside a universal consumption of foreign silks, excluding the silkworm from our country, we purchase, in England alone, one hundred and fifty millions of yards of the same stained muslins. We sustain, here and there, a rickety, or at best a contracted iron manufactory; while we import iron to make railroads over our own endless ore fields, and we carry our prejudices against our struggling manufacturers and mechanics so far as to fastidiously avoid wearing on our persons, or using on our tables, or displaying in our drawing-rooms, any fabric, of whatsoever material, texture or color, that, in the course of its manufacture, has to our best knowledge and belief, ever come in contact with the honest hand of an American citizen. In all this, we are less independent than the Englishman, the Frenchman, or even the Siberian.

It is painful to confess the same infirmity in regard to intellectual productions. We despise, deeply and universally, the spoiled child of pretension, who, going abroad for education or observation, with a mind destitute of the philosophy of travel, returns to us with an affected tone and gait, sure indications of a craven spirit and a disloyal heart. And yet how intently do we not watch to see whether one of our countrymen obtains in Europe the honor of an aristocratic dinner, or of a presentation, in a grotesque costume, at Court! How do we not suspend our judgment on the merits of the native artist, be he dancer, singer, actor, limner, or sculptor, and even of the native author, inventor, orator, bishop, or statesman, until, by flattering those who habitually depreciate his country, he passes safely the ordeal of foreign criticism, and so commends himself to our own most cautious approbation. How do we not consult foreign mirrors, for our very virtues and vices, not less than for our fashions, and think igno

rance, bribery, and Slavery, quite justified at home, if they can be matched against oppression, pauperism and crime in other countries!

On occasions too, we are bold in applauding heroic struggling for freedom abroad; and we certainly have hailed with enthusiasm every republican revolution in South America, in France, in Poland, in Germany, and in Hungary. And yet how does not our sympathy rise and fall, with every change of the political temperature in Europe? In just this extent, we are not only not independent, but we are actually governed by the monarchies and aristocracies of the Old World.

You may ask impatiently, if I require the American citizen to throw off all submission to law, all deference to authority, and all respect to the opinions of mankind, and that the American Republic shall constantly wage an aggressive war against all foreign systems? I answer, no. There is here, as everywhere, a middle and a safe way. I would have the American citizen yield always a cheerful acquiescence, and never a servile adherence, to the opinions of the majority of his countrymen and of mankind, whether they be engrossed in the forms of law or not, on all questions involving no moral principle; and even in regard to such as do affect the conscience, I would have him avoid not only faction, but even the appearance of it. But I demand, at the same time, that he shall have his own matured and independent convictions, the result not of any authority, domestic or foreign, on every measure of public policy, and so, that while always temperate and courteous, he shall always be a free and outspeaking censor, upon not only opinions, customs and administration, but even upon laws and constitutions themselves. What I thus require of the citizen, I insist, also, that he shall allow to every one of his fellow-citizens. I would have the nation also, though moderate and pacific, yet always frank, decided and firm, in bearing its testimony against error and oppression; and while abstaining from forcible intervention in foreign disputes, yet always fearlessly rendering to the cause of Republicanism everywhere, by influence and example, all the aid that the laws of nations do not peremptorily, or, in their true spirit, forbid.

Do I propose in this a heretical, or even a new standard of public or private duty? All agree that the customary, and even the legal standards in other countries are too low. Must we then abide by them now and forever? That would be to yield our independence, and to be false towards mankind. Who will maintain that the standard established at any one time by a majority in our country is infallible, and therefore final? If it be so, why have we reserved, by our Constitution, freedom of Speech, of the Press, and of Suffrage, to reverse it? No, we may change everything, first complying, however, with constitutional conditions. Storms and commotions must indeed be avoided, but the political waters must nevertheless be agitated always, or they will stagnate. Let no one suppose that the human mind will consent to rest in error. It vibrates, however, only that it may settle at last in immutable truth and justice. Nor need we fear that we shall be too bold. Conformity is always easier than contention; and imitation is always easier than innovation. There are many who delight in ease, where there is one who chooses, and fearlessly pursues, the path of heroic duty.

Moreover, while we are expecting hopefully to see foreign customs and institutions brought, by the influence of commerce, into conformity with our own, it is quite manifest that commerce has reciprocating influences, tending to demoralize ourselves, and so to assimilate our opinions, manners, and customs, ultimately to those of aristocracy and despotism. We cannot afford to err at all on that side. We exist as a free people only by force of our very peculiarities. They are the legitimate peculiarities of Republicanism, and, as such, are the test of nationality.

Nationality! It is as just as it is popular. Whatever policy, interest or institution is local, sectional, or foreign, must be zealously watched and counteracted; for it tends directly to social derangement, and so to the subversion of our democratic constitution.

But it is seen at once that this Nationality is identical with that very political independence which results from a high tone of individuality on the part of the citizen. Let it have free play, then, and so let every citizen value himself at his just worth, in body and soul; namely, not a serf or a subject of any human authori-

ty, or the inferior of any class, however great or wise, but a freeman, who is so because "Truth has made him free;" who not only, equally with all others, rules in the Republic, but is also bound, equally with any other, to exercise designing wisdom and executive vigor and efficiency in the eternal duty of saving and perfecting the State. When this Nationality shall prevail, we shall no more see fashion, wealth, social rank, political combination, or even official proscription, effective in suppressing the utterance of mature opinions and true convictions; and so enforcing for brief periods, with long reactions, political conformity, at the hazard of the public welfare, and at the cost of the public virtue.

Let this Nationality prevail, and then, instead of keenly watching, not without sinister wishes, for war or famine, the fitful skies, or the evermore capricious diplomacy of Europe; and instead of being hurried into unwise commercial expansion by the rise of credit there, and then back again into exhausting convulsions and bankruptcy by its fall, we shall have a steady and a prosperous, because it will be an independent, internal commerce.

Let this Nationality prevail, and then we shall cease to undervalue our own farmers, mechanics, and manufacturers, and their productions; our own science, and literature, and inventions; our own orators and statesmen; in short, our own infinite resources and all-competent skill, our own virtue, and our own peculiar and justly envied freedom.

Then, I am sure that, instead of perpetually levying large and exhausting armies, like Russia, and without wasting wealth in emulating the naval power of England, and without practicing a servile conformity to the diplomacy of Courts, and without captiously seeking frivolous occasions for making the world sensible of our importance, we shall, by the force of our own genius and virtue, and the dignity of freedom, take, with the free consent of mankind, the first place in the great family of Nations.

Gentlemen of the Institute: From the earnestness with which the theory of Free Trade is perpetually urged in some quarters, one might suppose that it was thought that the cardinal interest of the country lay in mere exchanging of merchandise. On the contrary, of the three great wheels of national prosperity, Agri-

culture is the main one, Manufacture second, and Trade is the last. The cardinal interest of this and every country is, and always must be, Production. It is not traffic, but labor alone, that converts the resources of the country into wealth. The world has yet to see any State become great by mere trade. It has seen many become so by the exercise of industry.

Where there are diversified resources, and industry is applied to only a few staples, three great interests are neglected, viz.: natural resources, which are left unimproved; labor, that is left unemployed; and internal exchanges, which a diversity of industry would render necessary. The foreign commerce, which is based on such a narrow system of production, obliges the nation to sell its staples at prices reduced by competition in foreign markets; and to buy fabrics at prices established by monopoly in the same markets.

This false economy crowds the culture of the few staples with excessive industry; thus rendering labor dependent at home, while it brings the whole nation, tributary to the monopolizing manufacturer abroad. When all, or any of the nations of Europe shall, as well as ourselves, be found successfully competing with England in manufactures, then, and not till then, will the free trade she recommends, be as wise for others, as she now insists. But, when that time shall come, I venture to predict that England will cease to inculcate that dogma.

The importance of maintaining such a policy as will result in a diversified application of industry, seems to rest on these impregnable grounds, viz:—1st. That the use of indigenous materials does not diminish, but on the contrary, increases the public wealth. 2d. That society is constituted so, that individuals voluntarily classify themselves in all, and not in a few, departments of industry, by reason of a distributive congeniality of tastes and adaptation of powers; and that while labor so distributed is more profitable, the general contentment and independence of the people is secured and preserved, and their enterprise is stimulated and sustained.

I think it must be confessed now, by all candid observers within our country, that manufactures have become in a degree the exclusive employment of the citizens of the Eastern States; and

yet they are precarious, and comparatively unprofitable, because our own patronage, so generously discriminating in favor of European manufactures, enables them to make the desired fabrics sometimes at less cost: that the citizens of the Middle and Western States, are confined chiefly to the raising of staple breadstuffs, for which, while they have a great excess above the home consumption, resulting from the neglect of domestic manufactures, they find a market almost overstocked with similar productions, raised in countries as peculiarly agricultural as our own; and that the citizens of the Southern States, restrict themselves chiefly to the culture of cotton, of which, practically, they have the monopoly; that the annual enlargement of the cotton culture tends to depress its price, and that they pay more dearly for the fabrics which they use, than would be necessary if our own manufactures could better maintain a competition with those of Europe.

These inconveniences would indeed become intolerable evils, if they were not compensated in some measure by the great increase of wealth resulting from the immigration of foreign labor; and for the establishment of a new and prosperous gold trade between the Atlantic States and California.

Why should those inconveniences be endured? Certainly not because we do not know that they are unnecessary. We jealously guard our culture of breadstuffs and sugar against the competition of the foreign farmer and planter in our own markets. Practically, our gold mining is equally protected. We also give an exclusive preference in our internal commerce to our own shipping. No one questions the advantage of these great departments of production. But it is not easy to see how the equally successful opening of other domestic resources should not be equally beneficial.

Why should it be less profitable to supply ourselves with copper, iron, glass and paper from our own resources, and by our own industry, than it is to supply ourselves in the same way with flour, sugar and gold? Why should it not be as economical to manufacture our own cotton, wool, iron and gold, as it is to manufacture our own furniture, wooden clocks and ships? If mining and manufactures generally were not profitable in England, they

would not be prosecuted there. If they are profitable there, they would be profitable here. You reply that manufacturing labor is cheaper there. Yes, because you leave it there. If you offer inducements, it will come here just as freely as agricultural labor now comes. The ocean is reduced to a ferry. If you must depend on foreign skill for fabrics, I pray you bring that skill here, where you can sustain it with greater economy.

The advocates of dependence on foreign manufactures, tell us that it is as well to sell gold and buy iron, as it would be to sell iron to buy gold. I reply, 1st. That, to the extent of our necessary consumption, having exhaustless resources and adequate industry or ability to procure it, we ought to buy neither. 2d. When Boulton, the associate of the great Watt, showed his iron manufactory, he said, "I sell here what all men are anxious to buy, Power." It has been proved that a nation may sell gold for iron without gaining power, as many a nation has bought iron without securing it. But it is clear, that the nation that makes its own iron creates its own power.

It seems to be understood by the advocates of foreign manufactures here, that only those branches languish which have not sufficient vigor to be brought to maturity, by never so much protection. This is opposed to the experience of all mankind. There is not in France or in England, a successful culture or manufacture that has not been made so by the application of national protection and patronage. The manufacturers of England are sustained, even now, by the sacrifice of agricultural labor there. The decline of agriculture is proved by a rapidly increasing emigration from the British Islands. What England calls free trade, is indeed a new form of protection, but it is protection, nevertheless. She finds it equally effective and expensive. British commerce and British manufactures do indeed flourish, but British empire declines. The decline is seen in the tameness of England now towards Russia, France, and our own country, compared with the different attitude she maintained against all offending powers in the age of the elder Pitt and the younger Pitt.

It is insisted, however, that encouragement yielded to the industry of one class of citizens, is partial and injurious to that of others. This cannot be in any just sense true, since the prosperity

and vigor of each class depends in a great degree on the prosperity and vigor of all the industrial classes. But all experience shows, that if Government do not favor domestic enterprise, its negative policy will benefit some foreign monopoly, which of all class-legislation is most injurious and least excusable.

Once more, it is said that the present system must be right, because predictions of diasters, that should result from it, have been falsified. I do not dwell on the signs, which seem now to portend a fearful fulfillment, nevertheless, of those predictions. Let it suffice to say, that it is as common an error, to look prematurely for the blights which must follow erroneous culture, as it is to expect propitious fruits from that which is judicious. This nation is youthful and vigorous. It cannot now suffer long and deeply from any cause, for it has great recuperative energies. It is not destined to an immediate fall, or even to early decline. It is the part of wisdom, nevertheless, not to try how much of erroneous administration it can bear, but to adapt our policy always so as to favor the most complete and lasting success of the Republic.

Gentlemen of the Institute: I refrain from discussing the details of policy. Circumstances are hastening a necessity for an examination of them, in another place, where action follows debate, and is effective. I shall not be absent nor idle there. But I will not attempt to delude either myself or you into the belief that the opinions I have expressed, which, I trust, in some degree correspond with your own, will soon become fully engrafted into the policy of the Government. I shall perform my duty better by showing you that it is not wise to expect, nor even absolutely necessary to depend on, the exercise of a just patronage of our industry by the Government.

This Republic, although constituting one nation, partakes of the form of a confederation of many States, and for the purpose of securing acquiescence, allows great power to minorities. Although there is no real antagonism of interests, there is, nevertheless, a wide divergence of opinion concerning those interests, resulting from the different degrees of maturity and development reached in the several States. Massachusetts and Virginia, New York and South Carolina, scarcely differ in their ages; but, never-

theless, they differ in their industrial system as widely as Pennsylvania and Arkansas. The old free States have passed through the stages at which the merely agricultural and planting States have only arrived. It would practically be as impossible to bring these latter States immediately up to our proper policy, as it would be to carry us backward to the system which they are pursuing. They will resist all such efforts earnestly and perseveringly, so long as they shall feel that they are unable, like us, to distribute their industry, and so to share in the benefits of that policy. All that we can expect, under such circumstances, from the Government, is some occasional and partial modification of its financial policy, so as to favor the success of the efforts of the friends of home industry in establishing it on a safe basis, without the immediate and direct aid of Congress. And this will be sufficient. It is not yet forty years since New York applied in vain to the United States to construct the Erie Canal, which was acknowledged to be the incipient measure in a system of Internal Improvements to be co-extensive with the Republic. Now, not only that canal has been built, but the whole system is in a train of accomplishment, although Congress has not only never adopted, but has almost constantly repudiated it. Private and corporate enterprise, sustained by the States, has worked out what the Federal Government has refused to undertake. The same agencies will establish the American system. Capital, labor, science, skill, are augmenting here. Power is daily becoming cheaper, and consumption more extensive. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Ohio, have become manufacturing States. The advantages resulting from the policy are indicated, not more by the universal improvement of the agricultural districts in these States, than by the prosperity and growth of their towns and cities. Here are Boston, Lowell, Lawrence, Springfield, Providence, New Haven, Rutland, Bennington, New York, Albany, Troy, Rochester, and Buffalo, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Newark and Patterson, Wilmington and Baltimore, Cincinnati and Cleveland; contrast with them the towns and cities of those States which practically adhere to the policy of employing foreign industry, and you see plainly the

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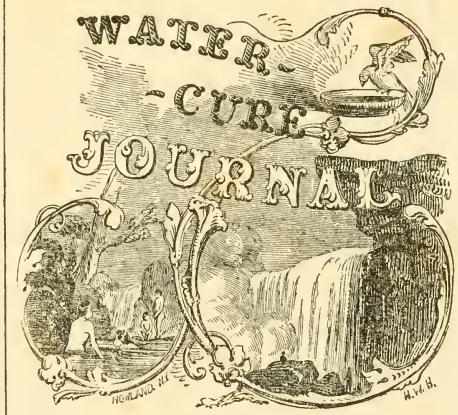

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